

Good 549 Morning

The Daily Paper of the Submarine Branch
With the co-operation of the Office of Admiral (Submarines)

There's a new
home waiting for
Sto. (1st class)
JOHN SMITH

They tried Three times —he wouldn't hang

Many strange incidents accompanied the unique case of butler John Lee, convicted of murder, and thrice taken to the gallows without meeting death, here described by **STUART MARTIN**, who invites you to explain it all—if you can

IT is perhaps the most extraordinary case in the annals of hanging.

Here was a man who, having been convicted of murder, beat the jury, the judge's sentence, the warders in Exeter Gaol, the hangman (who was Berry), the Home Office, and the whole gamut of English law about capital punishment. To beat Berry alone was something of an accomplishment, for he was one of the most expert public executioners.

Don't ask me if I can explain the strange incidents that accompanied the attempts to hang John Lee. I am going to ask you if you can explain them.

I won't waste much space over the crime. It was called the Babbacombe Mystery. John Lee was butler and footman to Miss Keyse, who lived at Babbacombe, next Torquay, in a large thatched house called The Glen. Miss Emma Keyse had been a lady-in-waiting to Queen Victoria, and was nearly seventy years of age when the tragedy occurred. Her house-

hold consisted of two sisters named Neck, who had been in her employ for about thirty years, a cook named Elizabeth Harris, and Lee, who was half-brother to Harris. Lee had been in the job for ten months, but was under notice of discharge.

On the night of November 14th, 1884, Miss Keyse sat up late writing up her diary. She often did this. Eliza Neck was the last to see her alive, having sat up with her till about 1 a.m., and left her still writing.

Somewhere about four o'clock in the morning the cook, Eliza Harris, awoke with a choking feeling. She found her room full of smoke. She aroused the others, including Lee, went downstairs, and they found the dining-room on fire in two places. On the floor in front of a sofa in that apartment lay the body of Miss Keyse, her clothing burning.

Lee helped to put out the fires, and this was practically completed when the police arrived. Investigations revealed a strange state of

affairs. A chair in the dining-room was saturated with blood, and there was a pool of blood in a passage near the pantry where Lee slept. Miss Keyse had evidently been attacked in the hall and then dragged into the dining-room. Her skull was smashed by two terrible blows on the head, and her throat was cut from ear to ear.

The police kept going. They found that paper and stuff had been piled against the body, saturated with paraffin, and lit. The only paraffin can was one found empty in a cupboard above Lee's bed.

In the pantry, in a drawer, they found a knife, with blood on it. In the dining-room was a hatchet with blood on it. There was evidence that an attempt had been made to burn the staircase. A window in the dining-room had been smashed, from the inside. Lee said he had smashed the window to let out the smoke after the alarm was raised. He had a wound in his right arm. He said that was caused by breaking the window.

Examination of his clothing showed that there had been blood on his trousers, which he had tried to wash off. His socks were found soaked in paraffin. Bloodstained marks of a finger and thumb were found on the oil can. The police said these were Lee's prints.

So he was charged with murder.

He protested his innocence at the trial at Exeter Assizes, which began on February 2nd, 1885. At the trial, his half-sister, the cook, gave strange evidence.

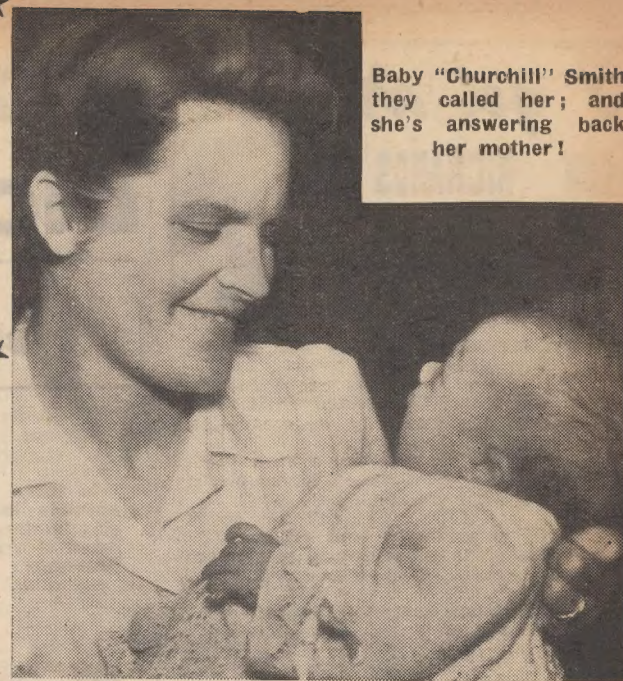
She said that he had told her that he would "have his revenge" for his discharge before leaving Torquay, and that he would "watch the place burn," meaning the house.

Lee had a reply to all this evidence, but it took the jury only twenty minutes to bring in the verdict of Guilty.

All through the trial Lee had conducted himself without emotion of any kind. The judge (Mr. Justice Manisty) commented on this in passing sentence.

"I am not surprised," he said, addressing Lee, "that a man who could commit so barbarous a crime should maintain the calm appearance which you have maintained."

Lee, from the dock, replied, "Please, my lord, the reason



Baby "Churchill" Smith they called her; and she's answering back her mother!

HERE is home news for you, 15lbs. They called her Churchill Stoker (First Class) John at the nursing home, though A. Smith, which your wife gave this doesn't mean she expects to "Good Morning" when we called at 30 Sarsfeld Road, Balham. Your wife threw a small party recently—just six—Betty, Michael, as you know, is in Joyce (Lynda's nursemaid), hospital, but is getting on fine now, and he will be safely home again long before you read this. Jim, Frankie, George and Ronnie; they all had a grand time while it lasted, finishing up at 11 p.m.

Did you know that your wife had managed to get a flat and is getting it all ready for your return? She has also acquired a wireless and quite a bit of utility furniture, and she very much hopes you will like it all. What a fine baby daughter you have, John! Weighed 9lbs. 10ozs. at birth, and is now

Mrs. Smith has had baby's photo taken, and is awaiting results. She has also got your watch repaired, but is very doubtful about sending it on to you.

This is all the news for now, except that your wife says, "My thoughts are always with you; love to you from the babies and myself."

I am so calm is because I trusted to my God, and my God knows that I am innocent, my lord."

He walked from the dock as if he had no cares in the world. Now listen to this. Lee was to have been executed in Exeter Gaol on Monday, February 23rd, 1885.

On the night before the execution he told Warder Bennett, in the condemned cell, that he had dreamed that three attempts would be made to hang him, but he would survive.

Bennett reported this to the Governor, who didn't pay much attention to prisoners' dreams.

Had they not got Berry, the celebrated hangman, in the prison for the job? Berry had never been known to fail. And Berry tested his apparatus and didn't believe it could possibly fail.

At the stroke of eight o'clock that morning, the condemned man, surrounded by the padre, warders, officials and hangman, stepped on to the trap door.

This door, I ought to explain, is in two flaps, which fall away when the bolt is drawn, and the victim is dropped into the pit below.

Berry drew the bolt as soon as the cap was put over Lee's face.

And the trap did not fall.

They shoved Lee off the trap, and warders stamped on the flaps. The flaps did not drop.

They marched Lee away, still with the cap over his face, and as soon as he was gone they tested the trap again. It acted quite all right.

They brought Lee back six minutes later and stood him up, and again Berry drew the bolt.

(Continued on Page 3)

ON ESSENTIAL SERVICE

L./Tel. John Wellings

OUTSIDE the trim little bungalow at 22 Cambourne Avenue, Whitchurch, Glam, Mrs. John Wellings, wife of L./Tel. John Wellings, was admiring her father's new car. "Isn't she a beauty?" she said. "I'm sure John will be pleased to hear we have it."

"You see, Daddy has a long way to go to work, and the car is essential to him."

So now you know, L./Tel. Wellings. As you can see by the picture, it's a smart outfit, complete with an ultra-smart chauffeuse.

After the demonstration of the model we adjourned to the bungalow.

"I don't know quite what I can tell you," Mrs. Wellings said. "You see, I write to my husband every night. That's a good record, isn't it?"

Then she added: "Tell him John Sweetland is still in this country. Wally, his brother, is in Belgium. Oh! and John Chilcott is out East."

Then Mrs. Wellings spoke of Christmas. "I shall probably spend it with Lorna, a girl-friend of mine. On Boxing Day



I'm going to the pantomime these days to buy anything you can say I'm looking for—worth while.

ward to receiving the parcel "Give John my love, and tell John I'm sending. Mum and Dad I'm longing for the time we are giving me a cheque instead when we shall be together of a present; it's so difficult again."

No. 36 Hails A.B. Francis Dennis

WE explained to your Mother, A.B. Francis William Dennis, when we called at 36 Pownall Place, Fulham, that we wanted a message for you and all the home news. This is what she told us:

"All at home are fit and smiling. They have put the windows in again at last, after the bomb in February, and although we have only two rooms we can use, we are still happy and staying put at No. 36."

Roy is doing a spot of work for Mother, washing the scullery floor and doing other domestic duties. He is doing fine in his new job at the R.A.M.C. Record Office, and is saving up for some boxing

We ALWAYS write to you, if you write first to "Good Morning," c/o Press Division, Admiralty, London, S.W.1



gloves to give you a real bashing just to show his brotherly love!

Dad is liking his new job, and you will be glad to hear he is a lot better in health for the change. Dad says: "When are you going to get that extra stripe? But prob-

ably you are coxswain by now."

They often ask after you at "The Crown," and will be jolly glad to see your face back there again soon, even if it does look a bit sad after brother Roy's efforts.

Much love to you from Mum, Dad and Roy.

I get around

RON RICHARDS' COLUMN



Fox Hunting is just Blood-lust

SAYS THE BRAINS TRUST

THE Brains Trust, consisting of a Professor of Zoology, a scientific Farmer, the Master of a celebrated Hunt, and a Philosopher, discuss:

Is there a real defence of hunting wild animals for sport? Shouldn't fox-hunting, stag-hunting and grouse-shooting be abolished in civilised countries?

Professor: "It is not for me to pronounce on the ethics of the question, but the hunt is an absurdly wasteful method of getting rid of

vermin. Also, many, if not most, of the creatures hunted or shot for sport are not vermin at all.

"In the old days, any creature which was seen to eat crops was regarded as an enemy, but to-day we know that most of them do good work as well as bad, and that the good generally outweighs the bad.

"For example, farmers and gamekeepers used to persecute the jay and the magpie, because they are notorious egg-stealers. But it is now known that they more than repay their theft of eggs by destroying enormous numbers of insects, slugs, snails, mice and rats, and the jays and magpies are now on the official list of birds beneficial to agriculture."

Master: "The trouble with jays and magpies is that they steal pheasants' eggs and partridges' eggs, and pheasants and partridges make good food."

Farmer: "I don't believe that the jays make all that difference to the pheasant population. If they did, it would be a pity, but not because pheasants make good food, but because they and the partridges are two of the best friends of the farmer."

"Why, as many as 1,200 wire-worms have been found in the crop of a single pheasant."

"I found 440 leatherjackets in one of mine; and others have reported mice, rats, and even adders."

Philosopher: "The defenders of hunting and shooting for sport are on very dangerous ground when they say they are providing us with food."

"Only a very small per-

centage of the population eat pheasant or partridge, and quite obviously that is only an excuse.

"Consider the number of birds killed at each shoot. It is far, far greater than the shooting party could possibly eat. It is true that they give most of them away, but if that were the motive you should find them equally willing to rear cattle to give rounds of beef away. It would cost them less."

Master: "The truth of the matter is that while some birds and animals are harmless, or even beneficial, when their numbers are kept down, they rapidly become pests if they are allowed to multiply too quickly. This is the case with rooks. They are listed among the beneficial birds, provided they are not allowed to become too numerous."

"It is necessary to thin them down by shooting them from time to time."

"If parties of well-to-do people are willing not only to do the thinning-down for nothing, but actually to pay the farmer for being allowed to do it, it is hard to see why they should not do so."

Professor: "Thinning rooks is a minor issue. Thinning pheasants and partridges is quite different. I am not satisfied with the good faith of any sporting party who professes to shoot the birds because they want thinning."

"The reason, of course, is because these benevolent sportsmen actually protect the birds in order to shoot them."

"If it was the thinning they were concerned with, they wouldn't be so hot on prosecuting poachers."

Farmer: "As far as thinning goes, traps and poison-baits will do wonders if used sci-

entifically. Not against birds so much, but as far as rats and foxes are concerned. The truth is, these sporting gentlemen like hunting wild creatures to death. I'm a progressive man myself, and to my way of thinking it's disgraceful and barbarous. Any civilised country ought to be ashamed of such members of its society."

Master: "With all your concern for the wild animals, you really haven't considered the point of view of the fox himself."

"To kill foxes scientifically might be quick and efficient, but by hunting them we do at least give them a chance. They often escape. Moreover, it is their nature to hunt and be hunted."

"If you could ask them which they would prefer, to be poisoned or to be hunted, they would say hunted every time. Personally, I think they enjoy it."

Professor: "That's nonsense; but if it were true, the hunt would surely not be sport in the finer sense of the word? A pack of hounds to one fox is not most people's idea of fair play."

"Stag-hunting is, of course, just unmitigated cruelty and blood-lust. Stags are often first caught alive to have their antlers sawn off, so that they cannot injure the valuable hounds."

Philosopher: "I suppose if sportsmen were real sports they would go out against a stag in his native country with no other weapon than a knife, or something equivalent to the stag's antlers. They would never catch a stag."



"Could you teach me some nautical terms, Admiral?"

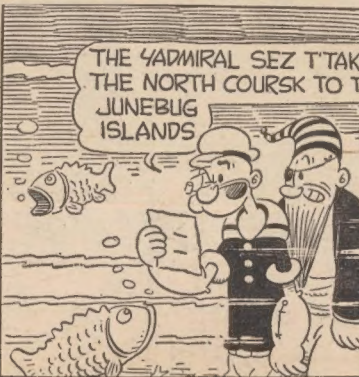
BEELEBUB JONES



BELINDA



POPEYE



IN appreciation of the past session of Parliament, "The Times" says:—

"In the progress that has been made with reconstruction plans, the present Parliamentary session has so far been by no means unimpressive.

"The outstanding events have been the discussion of the Government's employment policy, and a clear mandate was given to the Government to guide the national economy towards full employment and efficiency; the Education Act; the presentation and approval of the main features of the Government scheme for medical services. . . .

"Acts have been passed to provide for the training and re-employment of disabled persons and to reinstate ex-Servicemen in civil employment. . . .

"Plans for the demobilisation, training and further education and resettlement of men and women in the fighting forces are believed to be well advanced.

"In other important respects, however Government initiative is lagging far behind the process of events and the needs of the community.

★

"ONE instance is the lapse of 21 months between the issue of the White Paper, now shortly expected, explaining the Government's own proposals for Social Security. More serious has been the Government's faltering approach to the rebuilding of Britain's towns, and the two wider problems of Land Control and the Location of Industry inseparable from it. . . . All this is but one aspect of the apparent reluctance of the Government to consider the full administrative implications of the many projects they have in hand.

"The present Parliament has had a real opportunity of being remembered as the Parliament of Victory, but only if victory includes the Home Front.

"As emphasis at last begins to shift from bombs to bungalows, public opinion will look more and more for those main decisions that are vital for the winning of the peace."

★

OF the 25,435 doctors who replied to the questionnaire on the White Paper suggesting a National Health Service, 13,161—53 per cent.—it is revealed, say that they do not favour the scheme.

Of the 39 per cent.—9,521—who do favour it, most are younger men and women who have not "put up their plates"—salaried doctors and those in the Services.

Consultants and specialists, the top people in the profession, are strongest in their opposition. Fifty-eight per cent. say "No," 36 per cent. "Yes."

Replies show that general practitioners or family doctors have fears for their future under such a scheme.

"Do you think," they were asked, "it will or will not be possible for private practice to continue?"

Fifty-seven per cent. say "No"; only 30 per cent. "Yes."

But the consultants are more optimistic. Forty-two per cent. think they would be able to continue private practice; 34 per cent. say "No."

★

BOTH family doctors and consultants are fearful of letting their sons and daughters follow them in the profession of medicine "if a National Health Service as contemplated in the White Paper is introduced."

Sixty per cent. of the family doctors against 25 per cent., and 55 per cent. against 29 per cent. of the consultants, would not regard medicine as an attractive job for their children.

But the salaried doctors think it would—52 per cent. against 31.

The doctors were asked how much they thought they should be paid, at the age of 40, if the White Paper scheme were introduced.

They replied, on average: Consultants, £2,520 a year; family doctors, £1,620; and, for young doctors, £520.

★

VICTOR SILVESTER, "c-o-r-r-e-c-t tempo" orchestra leader, got out of tune, and for "using the services of United States Forces in a deliberate smuggling venture," was fined a total of £600 and fifty guineas costs at Marylebone (London) Police Court recently, for Customs and imports offences in respect of silk stockings, perfume and wrist-watches.

In an alleged statement, Silvester said that an American friend, a flyer, offered to get the goods and send them to him when he got back to England.

"I paid for the first parcel," said the alleged statement, "and added to the purchase price not only the 25 per cent. which he was to receive, but also some monies which I owed a party at the Embassy. The total was £108."

WANGLING WORDS

1. Insert consonants in *O*A*O and **O**O*I and get a fruit and a vegetable.

2. Here are two female animals whose syllables, and the letters in them, have been shuffled. What are they?
TINE — SERGSIVX.

3. If "solid" is the "lid" of substance, what is the lid of (a) Strength, (b) Heaviness.

4. Find the two things to read hidden in: Oldest or youngest, they all like Edgar Allan Poe, master of the macabre.

Answers to Wangling Words—No. 487

1. FIJI, SOLOMON.
2. SLIPPER—BRACES.
3. (a) Decimate, (b) Mater.

JANE



"HE WOULDN'T HANG"

(Continued from Page 1)

And again the trap stuck where it was.

This was getting serious. Nobody could account for it. But they were going to hang Lee; it was their job to hang him, and these were conscientious workmen at hanging.

They marched Lee back to a cell and called for carpenters. They sawed the edges off the flaps so that there could not be another hitch. They tested the trap again. It worked.

Back came Lee at ten minutes past eight.

He was guided to the trap for the third time. The bolt was drawn for the third time.

And the trap refused to work for the third time.

This was more than serious. It spread consternation among the officials. Their nerve was gone.

They put Lee back in his cell, took the cap off his face, and left him. They communicated the catastrophe to the Home Office. The Home Office did not know what to do. No man had ever been so near eternity by hanging and had not made the grade.

The Home Office compromised. They granted the prisoner a "respite," and went into a huddle about the whole business.

I can tell you more strange things about this tragic attempt to hang Lee. The Governor of Exeter Gaol always carried about with him a little pocket almanack. Under each day there was a quotation, sometimes from the Bible, sometimes from famous writers.

QUIZ for today

Answers to Quiz in No. 548

1. A stitch is a knot made in sewing, line of verse, pain in the side, part of a sewing machine?
2. Why are 20 shillings called a Pound?
3. What is the oldest canal still in use, and about how old is it?
4. When were the first covered double-deck buses used in London?
5. About how many times is the communication cord pulled every year on British railways?
6. Which of the following is an intruder, and why? Pill, Tablet, Pellet, Tabloid, Bolus?

1. Kind of hat.
2. Sweep chimneys. (It was the first jointed sweep's brush.)
3. Jacob Ritty, 1879.
4. The first guineas were coined in Charles II's reign, and were minted from gold obtained from the Guinea Coast.
5. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey. They all lived in the Lake District of Cumberland.
6. Seccotine is a trade name; others aren't.

The Governor took out his book to make a note about this incident, and his eye leaped to the quotation printed below the date of Monday, February 23rd. This is what he read:

"Surely it is the hand of the Lord that has done this."

You can call that coincidence or what you will. I give it as a matter of interest.

But the Home Office was shaken. The same evening as the trap-door at the gaol had refused to work, Mr. (later Lord) Cross rose up in the House of Commons and asked whether, "in view of what had occurred at Exeter Gaol" that morning, any more attempts were to be made to hang Lee."

The Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) faced a crowded House and shook his head. "No, sir," he said, in reply. "No, sir." He couldn't say more—or less. The House was satisfied.

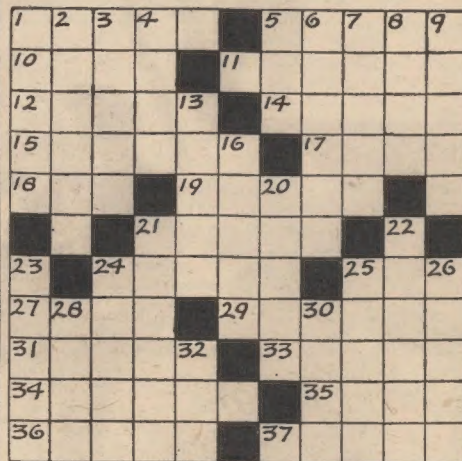
Well, they hadn't finished with Lee, although they didn't try to hang him any more. They sent him to penal servitude for life. He spent most of over twenty years at Portland, a useful and exemplary prisoner, a member of the chapel choir.

I know that some people regarded the failure as a sign from Heaven.

I don't know. Think over the matters of Lee's dream, the quotation in the Governor's diary, the tests and further tests that were made. Lee always said he was innocent. Was all this merely coincidence? Or what?

Write and tell me if you think so, or what you think. I'll be interested.

CROSSWORD CORNER



CLUES ACROSS.

- 1 Slant.
- 5 Wood.
- 10 One of U.S.A.
- 11 Glory.
- 12 Quite.
- 14 Trumpet.
- 15 Quiver.
- 17 Notion.
- 18 Collection.
- 19 Toes.
- 21 Famous author.
- 24 Summons.
- 26 Wheel projection.
- 27 Vivacity.
- 29 Engraver.
- 31 Uneven.
- 33 County.
- 34 Cotton gauze.
- 35 Formerly.
- 36 Soak.
- 37 Melodious.

CLUES DOWN.

- 1 Sorts out.
- 2 Frowned.
- 3 Young bird.
- 4 Tropical tree.
- 5 Hot surface.
- 6 Dissimilar.
- 7 Thoroughfare.
- 8 Certain.
- 9 Stair-top.
- 13 Rustic.
- 16 Search and rob.
- 20 Expenses.
- 21 Be suspended.
- 22 Constrain.
- 23 Short waves.
- 24 Justification.
- 25 Backbone.
- 26 Salute.
- 28 Oaf.
- 30 Sort of dog.
- 32 Rose fruit.

Y SIRLOIN C
ABOVE PAUSE
WILY MENTOR
LAD BUR SUE
SENEGAL PA
S RUN TAG L
AM BECOMES
COP FAR NOW
RAISIN PIPE
UNCUT BOUTS
M ANSWERS T

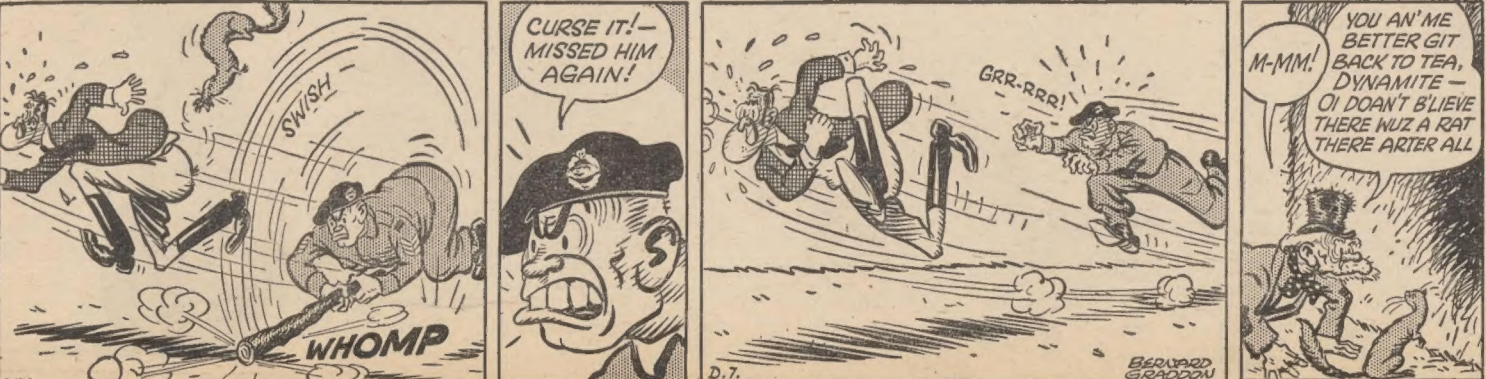
RUGGLES



GARTH



JUST JAKE



STARLIGHT

VERA HRUBA RALSTON, who makes her stellar bow to the English public in the British Lion/Republic production, "Storm Over Lisbon," was one of Europe's foremost figure-skating stars prior to the present war.

She was born in Prague, capital of the now dismembered Czechoslovakian Republic. In addition to receiving her education in that historic Balkan city, Vera studied for eight years in a ballet dancing school.

Her training as a dancer played a major part in shaping her career as a top-flight amateur figure skater. This factor, and three years' assiduous practice in London under outstanding professional instructors, laid the groundwork for Vera's brilliant rise to fame.

She was 13 when she won her first championship, the city title of Prague. In her first year of competition for the championship of her country she won with consummate ease. For the next four years Vera held undisputed sway as women's amateur figure-skating champion of the Czech Republic.

With her reputation assured, Vera visited the United States and Canada in 1937. She enjoyed a triumphant tour lasting five months and then returned to Europe. War clouds soon began rumbling, however, and the skater realised that her future lay in America. She left Czechoslovakia in October of 1938, and resolved to make a fresh start in that country.

She was featured for a time at the Winter Sport Show held at Madison Square in New York, appeared for six months with an ice revue at the Hotel New Yorker, then joined the "Ice Vanities" and toured with the show. When the Ice-Capades Company was formed in the spring of 1940 she was offered a contract as one of the featured stars, and promptly accepted.

It was while she was touring with the Ice-Capades Company some time ago that she became a *cause celebre*. As a "girl without a country," immigration authorities ruled that her visitor's permit had expired. When news of her plight made the front pages of the newspapers, offers of marriage from American men poured in from every part of the country. The skater's case was taken to Washington, however, and satisfactorily settled. Vera took out naturalisation papers, and is now a fully-fledged American citizen.

Vera studied dramatics in Europe, and has long nursed the ambition to make a name for herself as an actress. This ambition she realises in "Storm Over Lisbon." She speaks English quite fluently, and has a charming voice. Her middle name is pronounced with the "H" silent.

Dick Gordon

Good Morning



A crisp November morning in Leazes Park, Newcastle. The youngsters are taking their constitutional while the park-keeper gets to work clearing the autumn leaves. A playful wind keeps him on the go — as soon as he collects a tidy pile, along comes another gust, and more leaves come tumbling down. It's the fall of the year in **THIS ENGLAND.**



As soon as the public tires of watching greyhounds chasing an electric hare, we're all ready to launch our latest racing spectacle — bull-dogs (with pups up) chasing an electric postman.



SMILING . . . BEGUILING.

It's always like a breath of fresh air to see a pretty girl smile. And when the pretty girl is Gale Robbins, 20th Century - Fox starlet—why, it's more than a breath, it's a gale.



"Knock it back, you fellows, and we'll all have another before some ass starts chanting 'Act of Parliament, ladies and gentlemen . . .'"

OUR CAT SIGNS OFF

"Gale — ha! ha!
— joke — get it?"

